Local Governance Networks and Community Participation in Developing Community Cohesion Strategies

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Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to explore local governance networks through a single case study of a Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder in England, and the ways in which local communities are engaged to develop community cohesion strategies. Neighbourhood Management was an area based initiative in local governance in England, consisting of a variety of interventions, including thirty five Neighbourhood Management Pathfinders (NMPs) across England, funded by the Department of Communities and Local Government (CLG) from 2003 to 2008. The NMPs were aimed primarily at developing governance or policy networks across the public sector capable of co-ordinating statutory agencies active in deprived neighbourhoods to provide better local services, and secondarily to encourage the participation of local communities in providing the information from a grassroots perspective that is necessary for focused service delivery. The research for the national evaluation of the NMPs was conducted annually across the whole NMP Programme, and every year a topic was specified for a cross-cutting theme, with a sample of NMPs chosen as case studies. In 2007 the theme was community cohesion and six neighbourhoods were chosen as case studies. This paper is based on one of these case studies on community cohesion, in the Barton and Tredworth neighbourhood in Gloucester (which was conducted by the author, within the consortium contracted to do the evaluation). Data was collected through 14 interviews conducted with pathfinder staff, police, City and County Council staff, voluntary organizations and community representatives, as well as reading organizational and programme documents. The final report to CLG was agreed with the Pathfinder manager. Adoption of a single case study methodology means that the chapter explores
a particular approach to community cohesion in the context of neighbourhood management. The community cohesion theme paper in the national evaluation report showed that four out of the six case studies adopted a similar approach of not specifically targeting BME groups in working for cohesion (SQW, 2008).

The following sections review the ‘Rhodes model’ of governance and policy networks in relation to the ambiguities of governance set out in the introductory chapter (Bozzini and Enjolras in this volume) and the role played by NMPs in policy innovation through neighbourhood governance. The case study is then examined first in terms of the ethnic diversity and cohesion issues in the neighbourhood; the pathfinder’s approach to developing community cohesion strategies, including civic engagement and participation, and how these work out in specific examples; and returns to discuss the ambiguities of governance in the concluding section.

Theoretical and Policy Context

Governance and ambiguity: policy communities and issue networks

The perceived shift from modernist government to postmodern governance is based on the idea that local government structures consist of a single hierarchical organization within a territory, which in governance in replaced by a range of inter-organizational collaborations, including multi-sector partnerships, alliances and various types of networks. This inter-organizational field of governance is characterised by a postmodern lack of clearly defined authority, and consequently operates within four ambiguities as discussed in Bozzini and Enjolras in this volume. That is, ambiguity arising from the plurality of actors drawn from government and from civil society (as well as business) and second that these actors operate within hybrid forms (see also Howard and Taylor in this volume) mixing elements of market, hierarchy and network. These two structural ambiguities lead to ambiguous lines of accountability. A third ambiguity of governance is that over the nature and location of power, including that derived from asymmetries of resources and dependency (Bozzini and Enjolras, and Trimmer in this volume). Finally, governance is characterised by an ambiguity arising from the tension between
top-down and bottom-up dynamics, which leads an ambiguous division between the inclusion of particular policy actors and their exclusion from governance. In terms of policy network theory discussed below, this is an ambiguity over who counts as part of the policy community as opposed to an issue network.

The ‘Rhodes model’ of policy or governance networks starts from the assumption that relationships between government and interest groups are two-way in that both are ‘resource dependent’. Interest groups require contact with Government to attempt to get the policy outcomes they desire, and Government requires the engagement other actors to achieve its policy goals. Thus the organizations taking part in any policy network are interdependent in their pursuit of mutually agreed goals. They continually exchange resources through regular contact, but nevertheless compete strategically with each other is a context where there is no clear overall authority (Rhodes, 1997).

Marsh and Rhodes (1992) propose a typology of ‘policy networks’ which fall along a spectrum between two ideal types. At one end of the spectrum are ‘policy communities’ (which correspond closely to the description in the above paragraph) are closed and hierarchically ordered, with vertical links between powerful policy makers in government and key interest groups. Thus ‘policy communities’ designates tightly linked networks engaged in bargaining and deliberation over the shaping of policy, with and around a particular ministry or Government Department. When these policy communities cohere they tend to have shared values and are able to close their borders to outsiders. A strong policy community is thought to provide stability in policy making. In the US local government theory, stable policy communities are referred to as ‘urban regimes’ (Stone 1989). Rhodes et al take Britain as there model, which is a unitary state and is considered to be one of the most centralised states in the EU. An alternative ‘advocacy coalition’ model (Sabatier and Brasher, 1993) concentrates on the integration of actors at different levels in a federal state (i.e. the USA). Policy communities, advocacy coalitions and urban regimes all involve shared values and mutual dependencies.
‘Issue networks’, at the opposite end of the spectrum from policy communities, indicate only loose connections including a wide range of actors with an interest in the policy area, but little actual influence on the decision making process. Thus they contain horizontal links between diverse agents with a stake in a particular issue, often with huge power differentials and little by way of mutual dependencies (e.g. a Government Ministry and small community groups). Issue networks can therefore also contain conflict or where protesters campaign against powerful actors in Government or industry. (See Hudson and Lowe 2004: 133, table 8.2).

Policy networks tend in practice to be composed of two parts (i) a core policy community and (ii) a peripheral set of more sporadically linked issue networks. There seem to be two ways of interpreting the concept of issue networks:

- As social movements (or community networks) which have an external relation to government in firstly attempting to set new agendas and secondly be applying pressure from outside.
- As networks which link across the boundary between governmental and non-governmental actors, but contain a high level of conflict within the network, which, as a result, is extremely weak as a collective actor. That is, an issue network can be less an actor than an agenda setting field of debate of problems and policy solutions.

At the level of the neighbourhood, we could define partnerships as local governance networks yet the radical inequality in power and influence within partnerships (Purdue et al 2000) may lead us to question whether community representatives on a partnership are necessarily also part of the core policy community. Yes they are, if the main criteria are relatively stable membership and frequency of contact in formal meetings. Yet, community representatives often feel they lack influence over partnership decisions or even participate in a common organizational culture (Purdue et al 2000). Community representatives are also members of local issue networks, and form the nodal point of intersection of these peripheral and politically weak issue networks.
with the powerful players in the policy community (Razzaque and Stewart 1998). Thus a neighbourhood partnership illustrates the overlap of the two tiers of the Rhodes model and the concomitant ambiguity of the inclusion or exclusion or indeed ‘marginalised inclusion’ (Purdue 2000) of policy actors in governance networks.

A deliberative element is clearly part of the partnership working in the sense referred to as ‘deliberative corporatism’ (Enjolras in this volume). Engaging with the storylines provided by central government and the more powerful local partners may lead to more strategic development by community representatives, or it may lead to a marginalization of their own interests.

**Neighbourhood Management and community participation**

Neighbourhood Management Pathfinders (NMPs) are partnerships, and consequently neighbourhood based policy communities, which focus on the neighbourhood primarily as a site of service delivery. The roots of NMPs lie alongside Local Strategic Partnerships and New Deal for Communities in the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal (NSNR). Thus NMPs were to be one of the mechanisms aimed at narrowing the gap in life chances between deprived neighbourhoods and the rest of the country (Sullivan and Taylor 2007). The NSNR described neighbourhood management as ‘a radical way of devolving power to neighbourhoods’ (Social Exclusion Unit 1998: 51, in Howard and Sweeting, 2007). Neighbourhood management’s place in the architecture of local governance was assured by being assigned a key role in delivery within the Local Area Agreements and in terms of a high profile in the Local Government White Paper (CLG 2006 in Howard and Sweeting 2007).

NMPs were also to be part of the wider New Labour policy agenda of breaking out of policy silos, where public sector organizations, or departments thereof pursue their own policies to form ‘joined up working’ across organizational and professional boundaries, often through partnerships. Thus NMPs were not intended to be new service delivery organizations; rather the emphasis was on co-ordinating existing public agencies active in deprived neighbourhoods to develop a new strategic approach using the neighbourhood scale as a point
of integration to provide better local services. Hence NMP budgets are relatively small providing for staffing a neighbourhood office and to provide leverage for funding by mainstream providers (Howard and Sweeting 2007). Pilot projects funded by the NMPs were to be mainstreamed – that is, the funding and delivery responsibilities were to be shouldered by existing public agencies.

Complementing this emphasis on forming a strong policy community of big service providers, however, is the second part of the NMP brief to encourage active citizenship at the neighbourhood level, to generate credible voices from the local communities in order to provide feedback from the consumers of local services that are necessary to provide improved and focused service delivery. Effectively, this involved connecting up with community issue networks or even generating them around new opportunities for community empowerment. Thus NMPs also had a ‘community chest' budget dedicated to distributing small grants to build the capacity of local community groups to provide small scale services and promote active citizenship (Howard and Sweeting 2007). Policy innovations developed by NMPs were intended to be mainstreamed through a later funding regime, the Local Area Agreements, from April 2008.

The neighbourhood and cohesion issues

Community cohesion in neighbourhood governance

Neighbourhoods are among other things a physical and policy space in which diversity is managed (Madanipour 2005). Much of the discussion around diversity in residential neighbourhoods has been concerned with ethnic difference (with upsurges of policy interest in the wake of conflicts). It has been argued that building up trust between diverse communities in a neighbourhood requires neutral civic spaces in which social interaction is possible for civil society to flourish (Allen and Cars 2001). Community leaders may be important in reaching out from, for example, faith communities (Furbey et al 2006), but they can also act as gate keepers and slow down the development of bridging capital (Harrison et al 1995). There is relatively little
research on the experiences of new migrants Britain in (usually deprived) neighbourhoods, but it is clear that managing tensions between established communities and new arrivals can be a challenge (Robinson and Reeve 2006). Building trust can be a slow process and community facilities are often at the forefront of this work but sometimes sharing the space is as much as different groups want (Harrison et al 1995). Current policy, for example through Local Area Agreements, aims to make neighbourhood based organizations and activities respond to this diversity.

The case study neighbourhood
The Gloucester Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder (called Community Counts) included Barton and Tredworth, two adjacent and highly ethnically mixed neighbourhoods, as well as two white working class areas - White City and the Parry Estate. Barton and Tredworth consist of narrow streets of terraced houses, many privately owned, whereas the Parry Estate has the layout of a low rise council estate, lacking local resources such as a GP surgery or primary school.

According to the 2001 census, the population of the Barton and Tredworth ward (most of the neighbourhood pathfinder area) was 10,327, including 7,251 White (70.2%), 1,852 Asian or Asian British (17.9%), 733 Black or Black British (7.1%), 434 mixed heritage (4.2%) and 57 Chinese or other Ethnic Group (0.6%) which gives a total BME population of 3,076 (29.8%). The current population of the whole pathfinder area is estimated at 15,700 (Delivery Plan 2004-5). There are five primary schools in the pathfinder area, but no secondary school, as secondary schools are located on the periphery of Gloucester. Barton and Tredworth are the classic inner city neighbourhoods of Gloucester, with a history of poverty and high crime rates (three times as much recorded crime as in the neighbouring area at the beginning of the pathfinder), with drug dealing as a local problem.

Ethnicity and the neighbourhood
Barton and Tredworth occupy a unique position within Gloucester as the most (and only significantly) ethnically mixed areas in the city and even more so in
a largely affluent, white, rural county. Barton and Tredworth include Asian (mainly Muslim) and African-Caribbean communities as well as being to main home to refuges and asylum seekers in the city and county. Neighbouring White City by contrast is mainly white working class, but contains a significant number of people of dual heritage.

The largest BME group in the pathfinder area are Asian Muslims, which are a well organised and articulate community, centred around two mosques situated in Barton, but also sustain other voluntary sector organizations – focusing on youth and the Asian elders groups. The main body of this community is a more established Gujarati population settled in the 1960s with a smaller, more recent group from Bangladesh. External observers see the religious Muslim community as fairly conservative, or fundamentalist, with Imams coming from Bangladesh and unable to communicate in English with younger members of the community (interviews).

The most established and second largest BME group in the area is the African-Caribbean community, who, though less well organised and more fragmented by generational splits, is nevertheless well established in Gloucester and have a number of community organizations including Black churches, and groups catering for African-Caribbean elders and children and a music radio station, which plays Asian and African music as well as Africa-Caribbean and Black British urban music (interviews). The City councillors representing the area were all Labour, two of whom were Asian and one was African-Caribbean.

More recently arrived ethnic minorities consist of economic migrants on the one hand and asylum seekers and refugees on the other. The largest group of migrants are Polish, with their own community organization. Smaller numbers come from other East European countries, particularly the Czech Republic and reference is also made to some from Russia or Ukraine. Portuguese speakers (from Brazil and Angola as well as Portugal) form a second new economic migrant community. Many of the Polish migrants were young single male workers, but half of those interviewed in a recent survey commissioned
by Community Counts expect to be joined by partners and/or children (interviews and Community Counts report).

A separate strand of new migration consists of asylum seekers and refugees from a number of countries (a local voluntary agency has advised nationals of 75 countries seeking asylum in Gloucester). A substantial number of the asylum seekers and refugees are African including significant groups from Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea and Ethiopia and also Somalis and Sudanese, have mainly settled in Barton where housing is provided for asylum seekers by two Home Office approved agencies. Kurds from Iraq, Turkey, Syria and Iran form another significant group. A small Czech Roma community arrived as asylum seekers, and have now been re-classified as EU migrants (interviews and NMP annual report).

Neighbourhood cohesion issues
Relations between ethnic groups were not considered locally to be tense, though there was (in one view) a feeling that groups ‘live parallel lives’ (see Cantle 2001) facilitated by a general tolerance. Some conflict has occurred between Black Afro-Caribbean, Asian and white working class young men around the local drugs trade. Black Afro-Caribbean men from Birmingham had made an impact on the local drugs scene. Gangs were not considered to exist, as such, locally, although there was thought to be a ‘gangster mentality’ among some local young men. Post 2001 9/11 and 7/7 fears of a terrorist threat were exacerbated by the arrest in 2003 and conviction of a local man, Sadjid Badat (the first British born Muslim to be convicted of a terrorist offence). The arrest of Sadjid Badat, who was living in a local mosque, was handled by the Metropolitan Police (from London) in an aggressive manner, which threatened to undo years of patient community liaison by the local police. A high level intervention from the Home Secretary was part of a restorative programme.

The floods in July and August 2007, which left the neighbourhood without water supplies for 19 days, had both negative and positive effects. The Muslim community responded through their religious and family networks to
the need to collect and distribute water, some of which was supplied by other Asian communities elsewhere in the country. This was negatively portrayed in the press and the police received complaints. The local police, however, started working with the Asian community to distribute the water. The net effect was considered by various stakeholders to have been a positive building of trust between the police and the Asian community (as well as the community more generally), since the police were encountered in a more positive context than the usual one of traumatic situations of arrest.

Two points were made by respondents: first that the competition for a scarce resource stripped away the long established culture of tolerance by the white community towards BME communities, and revealed an underlying racism; second that community leaders within the Asian community were sensitive to the response of the white community and public agencies responded quickly, working together to turn the crisis into a cohesion building experience. However, it also revealed that community cohesion was not well enough established at the county level to be integrated into crisis response in order to be able to foresee the potential problems generated by different readings of crisis intervention by white and BME groups. (For example, where streets in Barton make it difficult to locate bowser s this was seen as discriminating against Asian and Black people.)

Although community cohesion was not seen locally as a problem by any of the stakeholders, in the sense that there was a shared perception of little explicit ethnic conflict, the interviews did highlight marked differences in experience and life chances between different communities.

- Low educational attainment and high level of unemployment for some young African-Caribbean males, low self-esteem can spill over into other areas of their lives
- Asians not having the confidence to use mainstream services (e.g. youth work)
- Newly arrived (mainly east European) migrants experiencing exploitation at work and sometimes through poor quality housing linked to employment
Asylum seekers have often suffered severe trauma and may suffer from serious health problems (including HIV) and higher levels of disability. The transition from Asylum seeker (housed by state sponsored providers) to refugee status is a difficult one especially from single young refugees.

One of the issues identified by established residents has been the variety of new languages now spoken on the street. There is a wide consensus among service providers that provision of English language to newly arrived migrants was an important cohesion priority in order to overcome disadvantage.

The NM Pathfinder and its approach to community cohesion

When the Pathfinder was set up in 2003, a local community organization acted as the lead organization and chaired the board, while Gloucester City Council acted as the accountable body. This meant that the Pathfinder was more oriented towards the voluntary and community sector organizations (VCOs) in the early period and less able to engage mainstream agencies. It was felt that the Pathfinder was slow to start on service delivery, but also initially made little impact in terms of becoming a visible presence in the community. Community Counts was re-organized in 2004, with Gloucestershire County Council as lead and accountable body. A new neighbourhood manager was appointed and Community Counts was under pressure to get on with service delivery. This has been followed by a later emphasis on resident involvement and a late rise in the recognition rate of Community Counts among local residents from 6% in 2003 to 19% in 2006 and 28% in 2007.

From 2004 the partnership board has been chaired by members of the public sector, but with a local resident as vice-chair. The board consisted of a majority of community elected resident representatives, and includes representatives of major local agencies, such as Gloucestershire County Council, Gloucester City Council, Gloucestershire Constabulary, Gloucestershire Primary Care Trust, as well as Voluntary and Community Sector Organizations (VCOs).
The overall approach of the pathfinder was to engage local residents in providing local knowledge and setting priorities for universal services and using mainstream agencies to deliver services shaped to these priorities. The pilots funded through Community Counts, were then to be absorbed into reshaped mainstream provision. The Safer Communities Team set up as a Neighbourhood Management pilot within the Police force was the ‘jewel in the crown’ of Community Counts and the local street care team the second major intervention to be mainstreamed. The City Council also set up neighbourhood partnerships, which, though very lightly funded, are to roll out lessons from the Neighbourhood Management approach across the city. Some differences in perception of the Community Counts remained, with some VCOs believing that its purpose should have been to fund the VCOs to deliver services in the neighbourhood, including promoting community cohesion; whereas in the statutory sector, the purpose was conceived as a strategic intervention in the way mainstream agencies work in the neighbourhood, to engage the community in improving services by following a local agenda.

Community Counts did not have community cohesion as an explicit aim, rather the team aimed to ‘embed equalities in all aspects of our work’. This was particularly obvious in the resident engagement and participation work. Universal services (e.g. policing, street care) were used as a mechanism for engaging diverse communities about issues that are common to them all, providing both a common purpose and a range of meeting points. Building an infrastructure for community engagement to give voice to a range of communities within the neighbourhood, they argued, builds stronger communities, which are able to be more cohesive.

While the Pathfinder is located in a multi-cultural neighbourhood, and to a lesser extent a multi-cultural city, the wider context is one of a wealthy, conservative rural county. Community cohesion was not an explicit strategy in the city, county or the (countywide) Local Strategic Partnership (LSP). However, a cohesion ‘proofing tool’ checklist was developed for the LSP. A small amount of money from the PREVENT Programme was accessed by
Gloucester City Council to spend on community cohesion preventing ‘extremism’ by promoting a progressive ‘radical middle way’ within Muslim youth in response to the perceived gulf between fundamentalist theology and secular modernity. This was done in response to concerns from within the Muslim community and with support from Bristol City Council.

**Community Cohesion Strategies**

The interventions Community Counts made in community cohesion policy and practice can be broken down into three broad approaches.

- First is an equal opportunities and democracy approach - recognising and representing a full range of local minority ethnic groups within neighbourhood structures as an integral part of their broader civic engagement and participation strategy and practice.
- The second is a multicultural / bonding capital approach, supporting the social and economic wellbeing of different groups by providing specialist services and / or refocusing service provision to include excluded groups.
- The third approach involves promoting inter-cultural dialogue and fostering bridging capital and consists of specific attempts to bring people from different ethnic backgrounds together to increase mutual understanding.

The first theme of cohesion work through civic engagement and participatory democracy undertaken by Community Counts was core to its role as a pathfinder as such. In order to feed community views into mainstream services it is necessary to be able to access a diverse range of the local population. This has occurred at three levels: membership of the board; neighbourhood panels advising each of the major service providers – police and street care; and representation of active citizenship within the community more generally, as displayed in newsletters, in the consultative fun days in open spaces, the multi-cultural Barton Fayre and in the Community Awards ceremony. Bringing people from one neighbourhood to another within the pathfinder area also involves individuals in overcoming (to some degree)
widely held local prejudices about moving in and out of each others territory (i.e. between the much whiter White City / Parry Estate and the more mixed Barton and Tredworth).

A much sited example of community cohesion work through engagement and participation was the symbolic recognition of local community leaders and active citizens through the Community Award Ceremony, which Community Counts ran to highlight and celebrate the contribution made by formal and informal volunteers in the community. The Awards ceremonies were commended by a wide variety of interviewees. The community were invited to nominate individuals and over 70 were nominated in 2007 for awards in a series of categories, winners and runners-up in each category were then presented their awards in a high profile award ceremony. This ceremony made a big impression locally both for the diversity of the winners and for the small ways in which Community Counts registered that fact they were taking the contributions of citizens to the neighbourhood seriously. “It was the first time that people sat down together like this with real table cloths, and china, not paper plates” as well as being provided with entertainment. An Asian led community project felt that it gave them an opportunity to publicly thank their volunteers since “this place runs on volunteers”. The ethnic mix of the winners and the participants promoted a cohesive image, reflecting the contribution of all sections of the community.

The second multicultural / bonding capital approach of supporting the social and economic wellbeing of different groups by providing specialist services and / or refocusing service provision to include excluded groups. These projects aimed at changing how mainstream services work with BME groups.

Community Counts pioneered initiatives working with BME elder groups to counter a high rate of diabetes and heart disease among both Asian and African –Caribbean elders (particularly women) and high rates of hospitalisation. The social aspects of these medical issues included a low level of English among many older Asian women, dietary advice that did not relate to Asian diet and lack of clarity about diagnosis and use of medication.
Community Counts workers on both diabetes and health promotion were able to develop a team of peer educators from Asian and African Caribbean women and transform the way the service was presented by local GP surgeries.

Community Counts also supported the social and economic wellbeing of groups of new migrant communities. Welcoming new arrivals in the neighbourhood has been led by two local community organizations, with support from Community Counts. A Community Trust has set up a ‘citizenship’ course, which instead of working on a deficit model of new arrivals needing to be inculcated with British values, has started from the immediate needs of the migrants. Each session included translators and focused on a topic of interest – such as housing or employment rights and was presented by relevant professionals – such as city council housing officer or police. Competency in English was widely regarded locally as a key element of citizenship, so they also ran English classes. Indeed, English language was an important dimension cutting across a number of these fields of community development work with new migrants, asylum seekers and refugees and elements of the Asian community. Similarly, Community Counts part funded a welcome pack produced by a local voluntary organization aimed at asylum seekers and economic migrants. The pack, too, covered a variety of practical and legal issues, including access to health care, employment, public transport and traffic regulations.

Community Counts also funded a survey of new communities in the pathfinder area in 2007. The successful bid was from a consortium led by the mainly white community organization, but included organizations from or working with African Caribbean people and asylum seekers, Polish and the Portuguese speaking migrants. Care was taken that each group was valued and properly paid for their contribution and the partnership itself became an effective cohesion project, including advertising it on the local radio station. 75 people were interviewed, including Polish, Portuguese and Eritrean / Ethiopian asylum seekers, but the Czech Roma community proved too hard to reach. An important by-product of this survey was that bringing these groups
together strengthened their bridging networks and capacity to engage across a wider range.

An intervention undertaken by Community Counts in response to fear of crime was mentioned by several interviewees as a model of a success in building intercultural dialogue in response to perceived inter-group tensions. A fear of crime survey (GCDRP) had shown a crime and fear of crime hotspot around a small play park in the neighbourhood, with high level of fear of going out at night. A group of East European (mainly Czech / Czech Roma) young men spent their evenings talking, drinking and playing music in the park, or in cars, which some established inhabitants found intimidating. Community Counts organised a barbeque in the park and got both the East European families and the established local residents to attend, which broke down fear and mistrust. Though small in scale, it was an effective response to a relatively unusual case of explicit ethnic tension in the neighbourhood.

Conclusion: the Ambiguities of Neighbourhood Governance

Here we return to the theoretical field of governance with is two forms of network: policy communities, consisting of powerful insiders; and more dispersed issue networks trailing across civil society; and relate these to the three ambiguities identified earlier: ambiguity over the nature and location of power; ambiguous lines of accountability; and ambiguity over who counts as policy actors.

Power and the consolidation of a policy community
After a shaky start Community Counts was able to assemble a coalition of major stakeholders, notably the Police, City Council and the Primary Care Trust into a neighbourhood based policy community with an influence on policy development across a wider sweep of the city. Factors that helped Community Counts to deliver on community cohesion included a clear focus on the concept of neighbourhood management as centring on getting mainstream public agencies to work more effectively with each other and with
the community. Little would have been possible without key players within the major agencies (police, city council and PCT) sharing this approach.

Community Counts was well-respected in Gloucester for piloting a series of initiatives in neighbourhood management, with either a direct or indirect impact on cohesion. In the clearest case a mainstream service of health provision (for diabetes) has been more effectively targeted on a vulnerable BME population at high risk. Community Counts was recognised as an important source of learning on how to support communities to engage in decision making on services in their neighbourhood (interviews with City Council). Evidence from individual residents indicated that participation had definitely changed their attitudes towards other ethnic groups.

A number of the Community Counts initiatives were now being taken up as mainstream services – policing, street care, employment and health and the overall structure of citizen engagement in information flows and decision making over local priorities are to become part of a city wide pattern of neighbourhood partnerships. However, the four mainstream neighbourhoods which were to cover the whole city were to be considerably bigger than the pathfinder area and lower levels of funding available were likely to result in some dilution of neighbourhood emphasis and it may more difficult to maintain the equalities and community cohesion dimension of neighbourhood governance central to the Community Counts model.

However, not all the big policy players were equally engaged in this policy community. Some mainstream services were deemed to be poor to non-existent in the pathfinder area (youth services), and others are located elsewhere (secondary education). At a County level there is much less diversity and poverty. Consequently, much less interest was shown in the inner city milieu of Barton and Tredworth, and the Community Counts model of neighbourhood governance (interviews). However, in the specific case of the appearance of East European migrants in market towns across the county, where local government had little experience of immigration and
ethnic diversity, the work Community Counts had done to smooth relations was seen as an inspiration to follow (interview County Council).

**Bottom Up or Top Down: Marginalised inclusion of community issue networks**

The primary aim of NMPs was to follow a top-down dynamic in consolidating the big service providers into a coherent local policy community able to deliver joined up services in the neighbourhood and to mainstream these across the city. However, the second aim was to engage and where necessary to develop the local community issue networks as a source of intelligence and participation in the emerging governance networks. The position of actors within the issue networks is always ambiguous where a degree of inclusion is required, but there is also a degree of closure in the policy community which is difficult to penetrate. Community activists or organizations may think of themselves as in the core policy community, whereas other more powerful organizations treat them as firmly confined to an issue network. For Community Counts, establishing good relations with the local VCOs was central to linking community issue networks to the powerful service providers, yet clearly power differentials remained. In some cases divergent views on the purpose of neighbourhood management remained among those VCOs involved early on, who had hoped for more direct funding. Nevertheless, the role of VCOs in mobilizing BME groups was recognised by Community Counts as was their provision of specialist services for those BME individuals and groups failing to access mainstream services. VCOs remain central to delivery on community cohesion, in spite of their small size and budgets.

The Pathfinder did, however, also open up a range of different levels of community participation in engaging with governance in the neighbourhood, down to the micro-level service monitoring of the cleaner streets and community policing panels, as well as the wider governance viewpoint of NMP board membership. These forms of multi- and micro-level engagement were translated into the symbolic recognition of the ‘local heroes’ of the BME communities through the awards ceremonies. On community cohesion, specifically, a clear focus was adopted of embedding equalities in all aspects of work, rather than treating it as an add-on. This was central to achievements
in reflecting the diversity of the local community in neighbourhood structures and in the public representation of this diversity. As a central node for information flows in the neighbourhood, Community Counts was able to pick up some points of potential conflict and respond quickly. Finally the deliberative nature of working together across ethnic boundaries on issues of common concern to all groups has had an impact on individuals concerned, shifting prejudices in some cases, as more inclusive storylines are promoted.

Network, Hierarchy or Market: dual accountability and capacity

Like many initiatives in service provision and local governance the NMPs were subject to at least two and often three logics of co-ordination – as collaborative networks, as hierarchies of government and as a competitive privatised service provision. Consequently they have to be accountable in two or three directions according to these logics. First, NMPS were accountable to the hierarchy of government, with its targets defined by expert systems. These big statutory service providers were key to successful service provision, and so cast a long shadow over the accountability of governance in this case. Second, services were expected to be shaped by a local agenda set by the local residents, and an important second line of accountability ran horizontally through the networks which engaged the public at grassroots level. Third, where major services, such as street cleaning, were privatised the operation of frontline service providers was accountable through targets set by their own company management in pursuit of profit rather than community engagement, with only weak regulation in successive contract negotiations.

The Safer Communities police team was good example of the tension between hierarchy and network accountability. Police targets were set for serious crimes such as burglary, which remain relatively rare, as well as internet fraud, but the neighbourhood Safer Communities panel introduced concerns with everyday nuisance such speeding and parking, as well as street drug dealing, and put more emphasis on police presence on the local streets. Fortunately, extra funding allowed the police to pursue both types of policing and to access new local intelligence for crime reduction.
A more problematic example was the case of street care, where services were put out to tender to private companies, introducing a market logic which did not sit well with the carefully nurtured community networks. The neighbourhood panel on street care, which was considered to be initially quite diverse, became gradually less so, while private sector contractors brought in new and less responsive staff working to performance targets to replace those the council had trained up in community engagement. While Community Counts existed this could be addressed, but a concern raised by interviewees was that neither the new contractors nor the neighbourhood partnerships, which were to succeed Community Counts had the capacity to provide the kind of proactive community network building provided by Community Counts. This capacity to engage with ethnically diverse community networks was seen as crucial in advising mainstream service providers, who themselves lacked the internal capacity to provide community development skills.

In conclusion, Community Counts sought to influence and change mainstream provision by developing a strong local policy community including important local service providers such as the police, City Council and PCT to join up local service provision, avoiding duplication of services that were already working well. Complementing this, they co-ordinated and developed neighbourhood community issue networks, engaging with key VCO service providers and supporting smaller community organizations directly through its Community Chest funding. They closed the loop between these two levels of governance networks by using community information and engagement to shape local priorities for the mainstream services provided in the neighbourhood. The ‘Rhodes model’ itself contains a central ambiguity as to whether a clear separation can ever be made between a policy community and its surrounding issue networks, as different actors will have different perceptions of where they and others lie in the configuration, and because to the two levels may merge and separate at different points in time, again driven by the action of the various policy actors themselves.
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